

**MNRG Senior Leaders' Meeting, May 11-12, 2005, Omaha, Nebraska
Meeting Notes**

List of attendees:

1. Mike Nedd, BLM Eastern States
2. Ernie Quintana, NPS Midwest Region
3. Theodore (Tab) Brown, ACOE
4. John Perrecone, USEPA, Region 5
5. Bharat Mathur, USEPA, Region 5
6. David Vigh, ACOE
7. BG Robert Crear, ACOE
8. John Sowl, NPS Midwest Region
9. Aaron Horton, BLM Eastern States
10. Stephen Schlobohm, US Forest Service, Region 9
11. Jane West, USFWS
12. Charlie Wooley, USFWS
13. Philip Barnes, Federal Highway Administration
14. Gale Hutton, USEPA, Region 7
15. Cathy Hill, USGS

NOTES FROM MAY 11, 2005 SESSION

Introductions/Agency Updates

Mike Nedd- Introductory remarks

- Letter from Col. Riley of ACOE
- Complimented the Planning/Communications Committees

Ernie Quintana

- Value of MNRG meetings outweighs the cost of travel

BG Crear

- Synergy of these meetings creates win-win situation
- Gave his background information

Bharat Mathur

- Distributed Charter/Guiding/Operating Principles to his managers
- What has MNRG done lately?
- Need to improve visibility of MNRG
- Enhance our collaboration
- Here's the value we are adding

Charlie Wooley

- Deputy for FWS in Minneapolis
- Here for relationship building

Steve Schlobohm

- Wanted to come to one of these meetings

Phil Barnes

- Supportive of forming partnerships
- NEPA is a decision-making process, not a clearance process
- FHWA has evolved
- Project delivery is important but will do it in an environmentally-sensitive way

Tab Brown

- BG Berwick is new commander for Ohio River
- Bill Ryan could not attend

Phil Barnes - FHWA

- Still no reauthorization
- Environmental Excellence awards
- Multi-year programs
- Data-driven organization

Charlie Wooley - FWS

- Upper Mississippi River National F/W
- Challenges on the Missouri River
- Transfer funding from ACOE
- Competitive sourcing

Steve Schlobohm - USFS

- John Phipps (6/05) Dep. Res.
- Roadless Area Final Rule
- Invasive species
- IT solutions
- Business operations move to Albuquerque

Mike Nedd - BLM

- Tight budgets
- Cooperative Conservationism - how to leverage dollars
- Consultation - need industry to pay more
- Cooperating agencies
- Relationship building
- EYM
- Records

Ernie Quintana - NPS

- Strategic plans - 5 yrs.
- Resource management plan
- How to quantify "desired condition"
- Native American tribal rights in NPS, hunting, etc.
- Competitive sourcing
- FHWA difference of opinion

BG Crear - ACOE

- National Security Personnel System
- Pay for performance - Defense Dept. is first to do this
- Every district has own IT
- Last appropriations was in 2000
- ACOE does not have to be leader
- Support to fighting global terrorism is #1 priority
- Chair of Mississippi River Commission
- 125 years

Bharat Mathur - EPA

- EPA Great Lakes new administrator

- Clean diesel initiative
 - What to do with 11 million existing diesel engines? They last 40-50 yrs.
- Fine particulates
- Indoor air
- Lead in children
- Mercury in fish
- Early retirements

Phil Barnes – FHWA

- Environmental initiatives
- Potential to do environmental good

*** Use Phil's presentation at Annual Meeting??!!**

White House Conference on Cooperative Conservation – John Perrecone, USEPA

- 10% Fed Agencies
- MNRG Case Study not accepted
- Maybe a poster session
- How to work MNRG into it

*** Senior Executives believe there's a role for MNRG to play. Planning Committee will follow up and make recommendations to Senior Executives on how MNRG can be involved. Planning and Communication Committees will highlight successes/best practices.**

Dave Vigh – ACOE

- Hypoxia task force meets once a year
- No funding to move forward
- June 3 - Task Force conference call
- Could be huge impacts to agriculture

*** Planning Committee to follow up on Hypoxia to get a sense of efforts to date on what has been accomplished and how MNRG can be involved. What is the next step?**

Bharat Mathur – USEPA

- Solid waste on tribal lands
- Purpose 2 in MNRG Charter
- Bharat will touch base with BIA/tribes
- Ernie – proceed with caution
- Not an up/down vote with MNRG members
- “Not an MNRG initiative” – Bharat

*** Bharat will come back to MNRG after broaching subject with the BIA and the the Tribes. Then MNRG will prioritize and decide what level of involvement is appropriate. Look at existing resources and determine what role we could play.**

NOTES FROM MAY 12, 2005 SESSION

New MNRG Vice Chairperson – Bharat Mathur
Communications Committee Chair (EPA)

John Sowl, NPS – Communications Plan (this was accepted...provide changes to J.P. by July 15)

- EPA maintains the website
- John needs to communicate to Senior Executives whether or not their person is actively participating. Senior Executives need to ensure each agency is represented and that accomplishments are forwarded to the Communications Committee.

*** BLM will publish article on MNRG in Vantage (BLM, Eastern States quarterly Newsletter) on Mike Nedd stepping down as Chair, Ernie Quintana taking over as Chair, Aaron Horton stepping down as Chair of the Planning Committee, and John Sowl taking over as Chair of the Planning Committee, etc. Link to website, etc. will be included.**

Website demo

- \$750/yr to maintain (EPA)

BG Crear will work to get NOAA and Coast Guard on MNRG

*** Need-**

- **link to mnrg.gov from each agency**
- **link from mnrg.gov to Senior Executive Biographies.**
- **link from mnrg.gov to each agency**
- **current list of accomplishments on mnrg.gov**

Sue Jennings – NPS

- NPS responsibilities for W/S rivers. All agencies have responsibility.
- Handouts (2): Acts/Flowchart
- Link to website
- Use this group (MNRG) to tell about W/S rivers, coordinate, resolve issues.

Dave Vigh

- Second National Conference on Ecosystem Restoration in Spring 2007
- What is MNRG's role?
 - Planning, subcommittees?, posters?, presentation of papers
- Site will be selected within 2 months
- Website for first conference
 - 1,000 attended
- Underwrite materials, sponsor students, publish proceedings
- ACOE has \$70-80K for participation in conference in next year's budget
- Response within next 3 months
- Dave V. is chair
- MNRG will play a role as defined by Planning Committee

- Annual meeting may generate something to include
- Senior Executives agreed to support!
- Planning Committee will flesh out
- MNRG meeting at same time?

Rebecca Soileau – Navigation Study

*** Cathy – MNRG role in Great Lakes collaboration**

- **Topic for November meeting**
- **Hone in on one topic that MNRG can wrap its hands around**

*** Steve – Regional Working Group**

Planning for Annual Meeting in November 2005

When?

- White House conference will take place July 28-29, 2005
- MNRG will be in November (exact date to be determined by Planning Comm.)
- Length: 1 ½ to 2 ½ days
- 60 participants total last year
- 100-120 before
- Week of November 14 is preferable
- Ernie will be actively involved with the Planning Committee
- Senior Leaders meeting for ½ day
- Theme?
- Categories?
- Target Audience: staff from agencies
- Location?
- Senior Leaders on panel to interact with audience
- Best practices: BG Crear
- Invite outsiders
- Ernie Quintana: Annual meeting of MNRG to share best practices. Not a conference. Ernie will play a heavy role.
- Crear: get on the ground and let Senior Leaders see what's happening
- Possible sites:
 - USFWS – Fort Snelling, MN in Minneapolis
 - Federal Building
 - Vicksburg, Mississippi